

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00455 211634Z

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 /041 W

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O R 211615Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5117

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0455

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, OVIP (KISSINGER, H.K.)

SUBJ: BUTHELEZI REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT WITH SECRETARY

REF: LONDON 6012

1. SUBJECT TO CONTRARY INSTRUCTIONS FROM DEPARTMENT, EMBASSY HAS ASKED AMCONGEN DURBAN NOT TO FOLLOW UP TO CONFIRM BUTHELEZI REQUEST UNTIL DETERMINATION IS MADE THAT APPOINTMENT IS IN USG INTEREST AND DESIRED BY THE SECRETARY. ASSUMING BUTHELEZI HAS AUTHORIZED REQUEST (WHICH WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT) WE FEAR PREMATURE INQUIRY MIGHT GIVE BUTHELEZI FALSE ENCOURAGEMENT IF SECRETARY NOT INTERESTED.

2. MORE IMPORTANTLY, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS AGAINST APPOINTMENT FOR FOLLOWING REASONS:

A. WHILE CHIEF BUTHELEZI IS DYNAMIC FIGURE AND ARTICULATE SPOKESMAN FOR GROWING NUMBER OF ZULUS AND OTHER AFRICANS IN SA, HE IS STILL CONSIDERED BY MANY SOUTH AFRICAN BLACKS AND PROBABLY BY MOST OTHER AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS AS TRADITIONALIST-ORIENTED "ESTABLISHMENT BLACK" WHOSE COLLABORATION WITH SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT, DESPITE HIS CONDEMNATION OF SYSTEM, WEAKENS THE POSITION OF TRUE AFRICAN NATIONALISM. HE IS CERTAINLY ONE OF LEADERS FOR SECRETARY AND OTHERS TO SEE IF SEEING A SELECTED RANGE OF REPRESENTATIVE SOUTH AFRICANS, BUT TO GRANT EXCLUSIVE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CAPE T 00455 211634Z

APPOINTMENT WOULD CREATE WRONG IMPRESSION.

B. THERE IS ALSO POSSIBILITY THAT ONE OF REASONS BUTHELEZI WANTS APPOINTMENT IS TO BOOST HIS OWN IMAGE, WHICH WOULD ACCENTUATE ADVERSE EXCLUSIVITY FACTOR IN A ABOVE.

C. AT SAME TIME, FOR ALMOST OPPOSITE REASONS, SAG WOULD NOT LOOK KINDLY ON APPOINTMENT IN WAKE OF SECRETARY'S DECISION NOT TO VISIT SOUTH AFRICA, SINCE BUTHELEZI HAS USED HIS HOMELAND GOVERNMENT STATUS TO BECOME ONE OF ITS MOST VOCIFEROUS PUBLIC CRITICS INSIDE SA.

3. ON OTHER HAND, SINCE BUTHELEZI DOES HAVE SIGNIFICANT THOUGH NOT EASILY MEASURABLE BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPORT AND IS A PERSON WHOSE MODERATE BUT WELL AIMED CRITICISM OF APARTHEID SYSTEM SHOULD NOT BE DISCOURAGED, EMBASSY WOULD NOT WISH GIVE IMPRESSION TO BUTHELEZI THAT HIS REQUEST WAS SIMPLY REBUFFED. IN CIRCUMSTANCES, THEREFORE, RECOMMEND LONDON BE INSTRUCTED TO CONVEY REPLY THROUGH PICTON MBATHA THAT IDEA OF SEEING BUTHELEZI HAS BEEN STUDIED VERY CAREFULLY BUT SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE, AS LONDON HAD ASSUMED, IS ALREADY FIXED AND HE REGRETS THERE IS NO WAY TO WORK AN APPOINTMENT IN.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PLANNING MEETINGS, MINISTERIAL VISITS, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976CAPET00455
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760151-0288
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760440/aaaabhvi.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 LONDON 6012
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <10 SEP 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BUTHELEZI REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT WITH SECRETARY
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, SA, US, (KISSINGER, HENRY A), (BUTHELIZI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006